

REMARKS

Summary of the Office Action

1. Claims 4, 8-10 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph because “the connector” and “the joint” have insufficient antecedent basis in the claims.
2. Claims 1-40 stand rejected under a non-statutory double patenting rejection.

Summary of the Response

Applicant has cancelled claims 1-40.

Claims 41-80 are new.

Detailed Remarks

Applicant respectfully submits that the new claims render the rejections of the previous Office Action moot. Support for various limitations in the new claims can be found throughout the application, and in particular on pages 8-10 and the accompanying specification to FIGS. 3A-3H and FIG. 4.

Application No. 10/043,552

Response to Office Action Mailed September 30, 2003

Date of Response: December 30, 2003

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CONCLUSION

A Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested. If there are any questions or comments that the Examiner wishes to direct to Applicant's attorney, the Examiner is invited to call Applicant's attorney at (408) 551-6632. The Patent Office is authorized to charge all unpaid fees to the deposit account 50-1914.

Submitted by,



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The undersigned hereby certifies that this paper is being submitted with the U.S. Postal service with sufficient postage as first class mail, addressed to "Mail Stop Non-Fee Amendment, Commissioner for Patents, Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450" on December 30, 2003.

Signature:



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